



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Presentation by the Three Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Matters

As delivered by Chargé d' Affaires Kyle Scott
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
June 14, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States would like to join other delegations in welcoming the Personal Representatives to the Permanent Council today and to thank them for their reports.

The recently concluded Bucharest conference on tolerance and non-discrimination, in which all three of you played instrumental roles, highlighted the importance of your work and the fact that we in the OSCE have a long way to go towards ending anti-Semitism and discrimination against Muslims, Christians and members of other religions.

The United States strongly supports the efforts of the Personal Representatives to raise awareness of tolerance-related issues at the political level. We also commend the OSCE as a whole for bringing tolerance issues to the forefront, not only of the Human Dimension, but of other dimensions as well. We note, for example, that at the May 31st Public-Private Partnership Conference on Combating Terrorism, there was considerable discussion on the need for Governments to reach out to moderate Muslim communities in Europe.

The United States believes that the Personal Representatives can provide a critical link between OSCE institutions and civil society organizations fighting intolerance at the grassroots level in participating states.

We look forward to future opportunities to discuss these important issues and to highlight the need for respect, tolerance and freedom of religion. The OSCE has a special opportunity to focus on these issues and to call on communities in the OSCE region to promote moderation, non-violence and mutual understanding.

We would like to particularly thank Ambassador Orhun for raising in his report the issue of passenger profiling and other concerns of persons perceived to be Muslim. These issues have been a major part of the discussions in my own country since September 11th. We are working with our government agencies on finding better solutions to these concerns. We would also like to thank Professor Weisskirchen and Ms. Crickley for their tireless work to promote tolerance. We urge the Personal Representatives to continue to use their political influence to respond to hate incidents and to encourage States to enact hate crimes legislation and to prosecute offenders. We encourage you to continue speaking out, and to encourage other moderate leaders to also

speak out when faced with hateful or other inciteful public discourse. We would in fact welcome a broader dialogue on how we can do this more effectively, creating, as Ambassador Orhun mentioned earlier, this “culture of inclusion”.

Ambassador Orhun, Professor Weisskirchen, and Ms. Crickley, the United States places great importance on combating intolerance in the specific areas of anti-Semitism, intolerance, and discrimination against Muslims, racism, xenophobia, and discrimination against Christians and members of other religions. We appreciate your efforts in this regard and wish you continued success on the activities planned for the future.

Mr. Chairman, you can also consider these remarks my own government’s reaction to the requests in Ministerial Decision 13/06 for further discussion of the future of the Special Representatives.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.